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Cloning: the New Age

Lee M. Silver is a professor at Princeton University. He introduces us to a world of cloning in his article “Jennifer and Rachel.” This article came out of Silver’s book Remaking Eden: Cloning and Beyond in a Brave New World. In this article Silver argues that cloning is actually not as bad as the world my view it, and it should become legal in the United States.

The protagonist, Jennifer, is a thirty-five year old, single woman, who has graduated from college and has done very well for herself. She thinks about how fast she is aging and she wants to get pregnant and have a child before it is too late. She does not want to share the child with anyone else. She chooses to have her own cells cloned in order to produce her child alone.

Jennifer realizes that it is against the law to clone in the United States, unless in cases of untreatable infertility. She decides to take a vacation to the Cayman Islands, where she knows other women have gone to have this procedure done. She goes to a reprogenetic clinic that specializes in cloning. The physicians and biologists do not question their clients that come in for these types of procedures. They simply do what you want them to do. I am sure most patients prefer it.

The physicians and biologist conclude that Jennifer is a healthy fertile woman and can readily participate in this alone. A week after she left she took a pregnancy test and the results were positive. Two weeks later she takes another test to make sure the pregnancy has taken effect. Afterwards, she schedules an appointment with Dr. Steven Glassman, her gynecologist and obstetrician. The doctor knew enough about her history to know that she was single, yet he did not ask any questions about her conception. She visited the doctor regularly and she was informed that she her pregnancy was going just as planned. The fetus was as normal as they could hope for. The doctor assures her that there is not any known genetic problem.

March 15, 2050, Jennifer finally has her baby. It is a baby girl, whom she named Rachel. The hospital officials question who the father is for birth record purposes, but Jennifer decides to tell them “unknown.” She knew that throughout Rachel’s life people would admire how much they resembled each other, but she would just blow them off with simple gestures.

The author poses a question; who really are Rachel’s parents? Silver explains that Jennifer is Rachel’s birth mother, since she was born out of her body. Yet, genetic terms say that Jennifer and Rachel are twin sisters rather than mother and daughter. Rachel’s grandparents are actually her genetic parents as well. And when Rachael has children, her children will also be her mother’s children.

Daniel Callahan, a critic of cloning, argues that engineering someone’s entire genetic makeup would have a great compromise to that person’s right to a unique identity. He feels that it is unfair for Rachel to go through her childhood knowing what she will look like as an adult. Silver rebuttals clones are not the only ones that know genetic features that they will inherit from their parents. Silver also argues that just because Rachel has the same genes as Jennifer does not mean that her life will turn out the same way. He feels if people are raised differently they will turn out the same way.

Silver believes that cloning should be less of the concern as politics and the children living in poverty should be more focused on. Jennifer is a stable mother, with means of taking care of her child. Critics also feel that human embryos should be treated like human beings and not to be tampered with. While Silver believes that cloning protocol does not tamper with embryos.

There are a lot of people that believe that cloning is taking God out of the creation process. Silver’s response is that each new reprogenetic technology is incorporated into our culture. The world is changing rapidly and there is a lot of new technology that will come about.

Work Cited

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